

MP

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: GENERAL HAIG

SUBJECT: Situation in Jordan, 27 September 1970

Hostages: The Jordanian Government reported to our embassy in Amman this morning that the 32 hostages have been located in a hospital and are in relatively good condition. An embassy officer is on his way to the hospital. A charter aircraft is standing by in Beirut to evacuate these persons. There is no information on the welfare or whereabouts of the remaining 6 hostages, apparently still in guerrilla custody. Earlier intelligence had indicated that a small group of hostages of "dual nationality" were being held separately, possibly at a location in Northern Jordan.

25X1

Early yesterday, Radio Amman released the names of 32 American hostages who were turned over to the Jordanian Army by the UAR Embassy in Amman.

New Government: King Husayn yesterday named Ahmad Tuqan, a Palestinian known in the past for being sympathetic to the fedayeen, to head a new 13-man mixed civilian-military cabinet. In calling upon Tuqan to form a new government, Husayn instructed him to do everything possible to return life in the country to normal and to heal the differences between Palestinians and Jordanians. The cabinet retains five military men from the previous all military government, six of them Palestinians.

Fighting: In Amman sporadic fire was reported by both sides and a heavy government artillery barrage was reported from the heights in the capital. Radio Amman has announced that the around the clock curfew will be lifted for five hours daily. Amman airport is secure, however, from time to time there may be some sporadic firing near the airport, according to the embassy. The airport itself is absolutely secure and firmly controlled by the government. The road from the airport is secure and patrolled by the government. Outside of Amman, fighting continued yesterday, although it was sporadic and and scattered. Irbid and Ramtha are still considered to be

MORI/CDF
C05142309

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

State Dept. review completed

CONTAINS CODEWORD

-2-

under Fedayeen control' and no shelling and only occasional fire has been reported.

25X1

Hussein to Cairo: King Hussein left for Cairo today to explain his government's position to other Arab Kings and Chiefs of State meeting in Cairo. Hussein talks to Nasser yesterday and according to an embassy source, Nasser was most accomodating and encouraging.

Relief for Jordan: It was announced to the press last night, that the Department of State has been authorized to make available 5 million dollars for emergency relief to Jordan. According to the Embassy's assessment, the food situation is critical in Amman. The Embassy believes that the Government and Army are now in position to effectively receive and distribute relief supplies. Present Red Cross efforts are apparently too slow and its local distribution facilities remain weak. In view of pressing needs, the Embassy has requested, and DOD has tentatively authorized, a direct airlift of PL-480 food stocks via USAF C-130 transports from Incirlik, Turkey. Embassy Beirut is arranging a charter airlift of food to Amman to begin today. Two U.S. mobile hospital units are also ready to go. Three French aircraft were scheduled to deliver relief supplies, including one portable hospital, to Amman and to depart with additional evacuees. The Red Cross will initiate four daily relief flights.

Late Hostage Reports: An embassy cable reports that the 32 hostages have departed Amman via aircraft for an unknown destination. Embassy thinks it may be Beirut.

An embassy officer has been informed by authoritative sources that remaining six hostages have been released and are in the hands of Jordanian Army.

25X1